

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 00860 060840Z

22

ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01

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USIA-06 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 CEQ-01

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3598

INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, TECH, SA

SUBJECT: BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF FOREIGN ENERGY PROGRAMS; ENERGY POLICY ITEMS I AND II B

REF 75 STATE 301432

1. EMBASSY REGRETS DELAY IN REPLYING TO REFTEL. INFORMATION COLLECTED TO DATE FOLLOWS:

2. ENERGY POLICY. ITO I.B. R&D PRIORITIES. SAUDIS HAVE NO COORDINATED R&D POLICY. WE HAVE HEARD CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION, HOWEVER, OF POSSIBILITIES FOR SOLAR ENERGY. VARIOUS MEETINGS HAVE BEEN HELD BETWEEN SAUDI OFFICIALS AND UNIVERSITY REPS FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES. THE SUBJECT WAS ALSO DISCUSSED BY WORKING GROUPS OF THE US/SAUDI JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION. SOME RESEARCH IS UNDERWAY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM AND MINERALS, BUT IT IS STILL AT A VERY RUDIMENTARY STAGE, AS FAR AS WE KNOW. A "COMPLEX" SEMINAR WAS HELD IN DHAHRAN IN NOVEMBER TO DISCUSS SOLAR ENERGY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

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PAGE 02 JIDDA 00860 060840Z

MENT. SAUDIS HAVE ALSO HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FRENCH

ABOUT SOME SMALL NUCLEAR REACTORS INTENDED FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES. SO FAR AS WE KNOW NOTHING HAS COME OF THOSE DISCUSSIONS. WHEN AND IF THE SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BECOMES A REALITY R&D MAY BECOME MORE COORDINATED.

BEGIN LOU: AT ONE POINT THE SAUDIS CONSIDERED AN INVESTMENT IN KMS INDUSTRIES, A U.S. FIRM CONDUCTING RESEARCH INTO LASER FUSION, BUT THE IDEA WAS ABANDONED.
END LOU.

2. ITEM II.B. NO AMOUNTS ARE OPENLY BUDGETED SPECIFICALLY FOR R&D. SAUDI BUDGET SHOW ONL LINE ENTRIES FOR MINISTRIES, AND THEY ARE NOT BROKIN DOWN FOR SUBCATEGORIES. EMBASSY HAS BEEN UNABLE TO DETERMINE AMOUNTS SPENT OR PLANNED SPECIFICALLY FOR R&D.

BEGIN LOU:

3. ABOVE INFORMATION IS TENTATIVE, PENDING FURTHER INQUIRY, BUT GIVEN THE DISORGANIZED STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND MINERALS, AND CONFLICTING PLANS AND DEMANDS AMONG UNIVERSITIES AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS, WE CAN AT BEST HOPE TO OBTAIN SOME ESTIMATES OF AMOUNTS SPENT AT UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM AND MINERALS AND POSSIBLY AT ARAMCO. END LOU.

PORTER

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